

U.N. General Assembly Acts on Soviet Invasion



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Following are a statement by U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Donald F. McHenry in the U.N. General Assembly on January 12, 1980, and the General Assembly resolution adopted on January 14.

AMBASSADOR McHENRY,
JAN. 12, 1980

This emergency session marks only the sixth time that the General Assembly has been specifically convoked under the "uniting for peace" procedure to discharge the peacekeeping functions of the United Nations when the Security Council was prevented from doing so. On each of those occasions, the precarious peace guarded by this Organization was undermined by a crisis that challenged principles underlying the U.N. Charter. The infrequency with which the Security Council has used this extraordinary procedure attests to the world's collective judgment that it be invoked sparingly and only in grave circumstances.

Today we are faced with a challenge to the principles of the charter as grave as any that necessitated our meeting during previous crises. We need no long oration, no extensive remarks to remind us why we are gathered here.

Afghanistan, a member of the United Nations, has been invaded by the Soviet Union, another member. It was invaded in violation of the Soviet Union's obligation not to use force against the territorial integrity and political independence of another state—an obligation imposed on the Soviets by both the U.N. Charter

and a bilateral treaty between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan.

Afghanistan, a nonaligned sovereign state, has been occupied by Soviet troops in violation of the international legal principle that no state may intervene by force in the internal affairs of another. Afghanistan has had its government toppled and replaced by a regime chosen by the Soviet Union, in violation of every nation's right to self-determination by its people.

When I addressed the Security Council during its debate on this matter, I chronicled the brutal series of events in Afghanistan. Every member here knows how the Soviet Union airlifted tens of thousands of troops into the territory of its neighbor and took over the Afghan capital of Kabul. Every member knows that after Soviet troops surrounded the presidential palace in Kabul, the President of Afghanistan was summarily executed, and a puppet leader from abroad was installed in his place. Every member knows that the Soviet Union then undertook widespread military operations to subjugate Afghanistan and its people. Every member of the United Nations also knows that the invasion of Afghanistan poses a serious threat to other countries, both in southwest Asia, where the current level of tension and instability is already high, but also elsewhere in the world. It poses a particular danger to Afghanistan's neighbors.

The Soviet Union and its allies, including the Foreign Minister representing the Soviet-installed regime now in power in Kabul, have asserted, both here and in the Security Council, that the

Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was prompted by armed intervention into that country by other foreign powers—including, as they tell it, the United States. They have asserted that all the world is well aware that Afghanistan has been the target of so-called imperialist aggression aimed at overthrowing the "popular democratic regime" that governs there.

But all the world knows no such thing. These allegations are an obvious attempt to divert attention from the central issues. The Soviet allegations are nothing more than a transgressor's attempt to mask its misdeeds. No one can or should believe them.

We are particularly insulted by the transparent falsity of the Soviet claim that its troops entered Afghanistan at the repeated invitation of its "popular democratic regime." As so many of my fellow delegates have pointed out during this debate, no reasonable man could possibly believe that the government of President Amin issued such a deadly invitation. Amin's Soviet-appointed successor was not even in office at the time Soviet troops first entered Afghanistan.

The truth of the matter is that the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan to quell determined opposition by the Afghan people to their own government. The Soviet Union replaced one leader in Afghanistan with another to its own liking. It is sheer hypocrisy for the Soviets to claim that their presence was necessary to prevent the overthrow of a "popular democratic regime" by so-called imperialist forces.

Neither the U.N. Charter nor any bilateral treaty affords the Soviet Union, or any country, the right to take military action in another country because it disagrees with the policies or performance of the existing government. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan flouts international law, breaches world peace, and threatens regional and global security.

The universal outcry against the subjugation of a nonaligned state by its great power neighbor proves that the world will not condone military intervention without legal or moral justification by one state into another. The strong responses to this act of aggression by many countries, including my own, demonstrate to the Soviet Union that it cannot ignore international law without suffering serious consequences. The United States and other nations are considering other unilateral and multilateral measures to further demonstrate to the Soviet Union the magnitude of its error, including withdrawal from cultural exchanges,

trade missions, and even the 1980 summer Olympic games.

But unilateral action on the part of individual states is most effective when it is taken in concert with collective action that expresses the will of the world community.

The Security Council considered the threat to the peace raised by the question of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan at length. The vast majority of its members voted to call for the withdrawal of the invasion force in Afghanistan. But the Soviet Union vetoed the resolution and stymied the Council's attempt to discharge its peacekeeping function under the charter.

Therefore, the nations of the world have turned to the General Assembly to denounce this dangerous breach of the peace and security.

It is imperative that we, the member states of the United Nations, express in clear and forceful terms that we will never condone lawless interference with the right of a sovereign people and the lawless invasion of its territory.

It is imperative that we demand the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan, so that the people of that country can be free to set their own course in the world and to choose their own leaders.

It is imperative that we demonstrate we cannot be duped into ignoring our responsibility to defend the principles of the charter by tortured explanations that insult our intelligence.

And, above all, it is imperative that we view this incident for what it really is. The Soviet Union insists that this General Assembly debate has been prompted by American and Chinese pettifogging; that it is being used as an excuse to renew the cold war; and that denunciation of its invasion by the members of the General Assembly will amount to an abandonment of the principles of non-alignment embraced by many nations represented here.

But the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is no cold war squabble. It is an act that the rest of the world cannot afford to ignore. It demonstrates that the Soviet Union has no real commitment to the principles of territorial integrity, to self-determination, to nonalignment, when those principles conflict with its perception of its interests.

For this body to remain silent in the face of open aggression would be for the members of the United Nations to condone a violation of the only principles that small nations can invoke to protect themselves from self-aggrandisement by larger and more powerful states. It is not

the United States whose freedom is threatened by Soviet indifference to charter; the small and nonaligned countries, like Afghanistan, are most imperiled.

So we cannot remain mute. We must speak out. We must stand united in support of the principles of freedom, in support of independence, and in support of the principles of self-determination.

VOTE ON RESOLUTION, JAN. 14, 1980

Of the 152 members of the United Nations participated in the special session vote on General Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES/ on January 14 as follows:

For (104)

Albania, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burma, Cameroon, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Gabon, Gambia, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kampuchea, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Upper Volta, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, and Zaire.

Against (18)

Afghanistan, Angola, Bulgaria, Byelorussian S.S.R., Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Grenada, Hungary, Laos, Mongolia, Mozambique, Poland, Ukrainian S.S.R., U.S.S.R., Viet Nam, and Yemen (Aden).

Abstain (18)

Algeria, Benin, Burundi, Congo, Cyprus, Equatorial Guinea, Finland, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, India, Madagascar, Mali, Nicaragua, Sao Tome and Principe, Syria, Uganda, Yemen (Sana), and Zambia.

Absent (12)

Bhutan, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Dominica, Libya, Romania, Seychelles, Solomon Islands, South Africa, and Sudan.

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nciples of self-determination.

ON RESOLUTION, 1980

52 members of the United Nations. 140
ated in the special session vote on
Assembly Resolution A/RES/ES-6/2
ary 14 as follows:

1)
Argentina, Australia, Austria,
s, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados,
Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burma,
on, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia,
ica, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican
c, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Fiji,
Gabon, Gambia, Federal Republic of
y, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana,
onduras, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran,
land, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast,
Japan, Jordan, Kampuchea, Kenya,
Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia,
ourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives,
auritania, Mauritius, Mexico,
Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand,
igeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan,
Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru,
ies, Portugal, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint
amoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra
ingapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka,
e, Swaziland, Sweden, Tanzania,
Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia,
United Arab Emirates, United
n, United States, Upper Volta,
Venezuela, Yugoslavia, and Zaire.

(18)
tan, Angola, Bulgaria, Byelorussian
uba, Czechoslovakia, Ethiopia,
Democratic Republic, Grenada,
Laos, Mongolia, Mozambique,
Ukrainian S.S.R., U.S.S.R., Vietnam,
n (Aden).

(18)
Benin, Burundi, Congo, Cyprus,
ul Guinea, Finland, Guinea,
issau, India, Madagascar, Mali,
a, Sao Tome and Principe, Syria,
Yemen (Sana), and Zambia.

2)
ape Verde, Central African
Chad, Comoros, Dominica, Libya,
Seychelles, Solomon Islands, South
d Sudan.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION A/RES/ES-6/2, JAN. 14, 1980

The General Assembly.

*Taking note of Security Council Resolu-
tion 462 (1980) of 9 January 1980, calling for an
emergency Special Session of the General As-
sembly to examine the question contained in
document S/Agenda/2185.*

*Gravely concerned at the recent develop-
ments in Afghanistan and their implications for
international peace and security.*

*Reaffirming the inalienable right of all
peoples to determine their own future and to
choose their own form of government free from
outside interference.*

*Mindful of the obligations of all States to
refrain in their international relations from the
threat or use of force against the sovereignty,
territorial integrity and political independence
of any State, or in any other manner inconsis-
tent with the purposes and principles of the
Charter of the United Nations.*

*Recognizing the urgent need for im-
mediate termination of foreign armed inter-
vention in Afghanistan so as to enable its
people to determine their own destiny without
outside interference or coercion.*

*Noting with profound concern the large
outflow of refugees from Afghanistan.*

*Recalling its resolutions on the strength-
ening of international security, on the inadmis-
sibility of intervention in the domestic affairs*

*of States and the protection of their independ-
ence and sovereignty and on the principles of
international law concerning friendly relations
and co-operation among States in accordance
with the Charter of the United Nations.*

*Expressing its deep concern at the dan-
gerous escalation of tension, intensification of
rivalry and increased recourse to military
intervention and interference in the internal
affairs of States, which are detrimental to the
interests of all nations, particularly the non-
aligned countries.*

*Mindful of the purposes and principles of
the Charter and of the responsibility of the
General Assembly under the relevant pro-
visions of the Charter and of Assembly Reso-
lution 377A(V) of 3 November 1950.*

1. Reaffirms that respect for the sover-
eignty, territorial integrity and political inde-
pendence of every State is a fundamental prin-
ciple of the Charter of the United Nations, any
violation of which on any pretext whatsoever
is contrary to its aims and purposes;

2. Strongly deplores the recent armed
intervention in Afghanistan, which is inconsis-
tent with that principle;

3. Appeals to all States to respect the
sovereignty, territorial integrity, political
independence and non-aligned character of Af-
ghanistan and to refrain from any interference
in the internal affairs of that country;

4. Calls for the immediate, unconditional
and total withdrawal of the foreign troops from

Afghanistan in order to enable its people to de-
termine their own form of government and
choose their economic, political and social sys-
tems free from outside intervention, subver-
sion or coercion or constraint of any kind
whatsoever;

5. Urges all Parties concerned to assist in
bringing about, speedily and in accordance
with the purposes and principles of the Char-
ter, conditions necessary for the voluntary re-
turn of the Afghan refugees to their homes;

6. Appeals to all States and national and
international organizations to extend humani-
tarian relief assistance with a view to alleviat-
ing the hardship of the Afghan refugees in
coordination with the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to
keep Member States and the Security Council
promptly and concurrently informed on the
progress towards the implementation of the
present resolution;

8. Calls upon the Security Council to con-
sider ways and means which could assist in the
implementation of this resolution. ■

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